

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05

H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 AID-05 /092 W

-----016128 271535Z /43

R 271255Z DEC 77

FM AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3847

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 CONAKRY 2417

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4

TAGS: SHUM, PINT, GV

SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS IN GUINEA; NEW AMNESTIES

REF: A) CONAKRY 2379; B) CONAKRY 2402; C) STATE 305618

1. SUMMARY. AMNESTIES OF POLITICAL PRISONERS IN GUINEA DURING DECEMBER NOW TOTAL AT LEAST 62, ACCORDING TO RELIABLE SOURCES. THIS IS THE LARGEST SINGLE POLITICAL AMNESTY IN THE HISTORY OF GUINEA AND IS A MAJOR DEPARTURE BY SEKOU TOURE. RUMORS OF ADDITIONAL RELEASES, AS MANY AS 250, ARE WIDESPREAD IN CONAKRY, BUT AS YET ARE UNCONFIRMED. GOG REPORTEDLY INTENDS TO FREE STILL MORE, INCLUDING SOME SENIOR FIGURES, IN 1978. SEKOU TOURE'S MOTIVATION IS PROBABLY MIXED: EUPHORIC PERSONAL MOOD FOLLOWING GUINEA'S VICTORY IN AFRICAN CLUB FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP; RECENT WILLINGNESS TO LISTEN MORE TO MODERATE ADVISORS AND EDGE FURTHER TOWARD NATIONAL RECONCILIATION; QUIET PRESSURE FROM U.S. AND FRANCE; BAD FOREIGN PUBLICITY EARLIER IN YEAR FROM FRENCH SOCIALIST PARTY (PSF), INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (ILHR), ALATA BOOK, AND AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL; GOG'S DAWNING REALIZATION THAT GUINEA'S

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REQUIRES MORE WESTERN AID AND PROSPECTS FOR THIS MAY BE MARRED BY POOR IMAGE ON HUMAN RIGHTS. END SUMMARY.

2. RELIABLE SOURCES SAY THAT AS OF DECEMBER 23, 62 GUINEAN POLITICAL PRISONERS HAD BEEN RELEASED DURING THE DECEMBER WAVE OF AMNESTIES. THOSE RELEASED APPEAR TO BE MOSTLY

MIDDLE TO HIGHER-LEVEL CADRES BELOW MINISTERIAL RANK ARRESTED IN 1970-72 PURGE. WE HAVE NOT YET BEEN ABLE TO SUBSTANTIATE WIDESPREAD RUMORS THAT AS MANY AS 250 POLITICAL PRISONERS HAVE BEEN FREED, ALTHOUGH THE FRENCH EMBASSY NOW ACCEPTS THIS TOTAL.

3. RELIABLE SOURCES SAY THAT TOURE DREW UP AN AMNESTY SCHEDULE BEFORE THE MAY 1977 PARTY 30TH ANNIVERSARY FOR PERSONS ARRESTED IN 1970-72 ERA. LOWER-LEVEL CADRES AND PRIVATE INDIVIDUALS, AS EMBASSY REPORTED, BEGAN TO BE RELEASED ON MAY 14. ANOTHER LOWER-LEVEL POLITICAL AMNESTY OCCURRED IN OCTOBER. SOURCES PUT MAY AND OCTOBER RELEASES AT OVER 100. DECEMBER RELEASES, IN CONTRAST, WERE MOSTLY HIGHER-LEVEL CADRES; TOURE NOW REPORTEDLY INTENDS TO RELEASE MOST OF REMAINING PRISONERS IN THIS CATEGORY DURING JANUARY 1978. HIGHEST CATEGORY, MINISTERIAL-LEVEL PRISONERS AND OTHER WELL-KNOWN SENIOR FIGURES, IS SCHEDULED FOR FREEDOM LATER IN 1978, INCLUDING ARCHBISHOP TCHIDIMBO (1970), EX-MINISTER OF PLAN ALIOUNE DRAME (1976) AND EX-EXCHANGES DOMAIN MINISTER ALPHA OUMAR BARRY (1976). SOURCE INSISTED THAT DRAME AND BARRY ARE ALIVE AND THAT THEY WERE SEEN AS LATE AS 10 DAYS AGO IN CAMP BOIRO. SOURCE COULD NOT CONFIRM WHEREABOUTS OR CONDITION OF DIALLO TELLI, EX-OAU SECRETARY GENERAL, AND DID NOT LIST HIM AS ONE OF THOSE SPECIFICALLY TO BE FREED.

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4. AS SAMPLE OF RANK OF THOSE AMNESTIED IN DECEMBER, SOURCE CITED FOLLOWING; BADEMBA BARRY, EX-DIRECTEUR DE CONTRIBUTIONS DIVERS (FINANCE) (ILHR REPORT APPENDIX 1(C), P. 22); THIerno OUMAR CHEICK (SECK), EX-SECRETAIRE D'ADMINISTRATION AND CHEF DE CABINET TO FODEBA KEITA, EX-SENIOR MINISTER (ILHR, APPENDIX 1(A), P. 1, #2 AND APPENDIX 1(C), P. 22); TABIROU (TAHIROU) BAH, EX-CHIEF DE SURETE (POLICE INSPECTOR) OF CONAKRY (ILHR, APPENDIX 1(B), P. 5 #31); IBRAHIMA KANDIA BARRY, SON OF RELIGIOUS LEADER ALMAMY OF MAMOU WHO DIED AT AN ADVANCED AGE EARLIER IN 1977 (OTHER SON HAD BEEN RELEASED UPON FATHER'S DEATH); FATOU CONDE (TOURE), CONAKRY WOMEN'S LEADER AND DISTANT RELATIVE OF SEKOU TOURE (ILHR, APPENDIX 1(A), P. 1, #14); TIGUIDANKE SOUMAH, EX-GOVERNOR OF FRIA AND WOMEN'S LEADER (ILHR, APPENDIX 1(A), P. 1, #12); YEDOUA KOUROUMA, KANKAN WOMEN'S LEADER (ILHR, APPENDIX 1(A), P. 1, #13); CELLOU DIALLO, INSPECTOR GENERAL OF AGRICULTURE; LAMINE CAMARA, EX-PRESIDENT OF KANKAN UNIVERSITY; MAMA KABA, KAKAN MUSLIM LEADER; MOUMOUKE KABA, PUBLIC WORKS OFFICIAL (REF B) (ILHR, APPENDIX 1(A); P. 1, #4); AMIATA MADI KABA, EX-GOVERNOR

OF DALABA (ILHR, APPENDIX 1(B), P. 13, #255);
IDRISSA TRAORE, EX-GENERAL SECRETARY OF JRDA (YOUTH
MOVEMENT) AND GOVERNOR (ILHR, APPENDIX 1(A), P. 3, #37).
EMBASSY EXPECTS TO BE ABLE TO PROVIDE MORE COMPLETE LIST
IN DUE COURSE. CELLOU DIALLO HAS ALREADY RETURNED TO WORK AS
A STUDIES BUREAU CHIEF, RURAL PROMOTION DOMAIN.

5. EX-PRISONERS GENERALLY STATE THAT APART FROM FIRST
YEAR IN PRISON (IN MOST CASES 1971-72), THEY WERE NOT
DELIBERATELY TREATED BADLY. BEATINGS OR TORTURE WERE
MOSTLY CONFINED TO INITIAL PERIOD OF EXTRACTING CONFESSIONS.
ONCE PAST THIS STAGE, PRISONERS WERE LEFT PRETTY MUCH
ALONE, AND WERE ALLOWED OUT OF THEIR CELLS DAILY IN
RECREATION COURTYARD. MANY PRISONERS SEEM IN GOOD HEALTH
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CONSIDERING LONG CONFINEMENT, ALTHOUGH THEY PRESUMABLY
BENEFITTED FROM PRE-RELEASE "FATTENING-UP" PERIOD. SOME
HAVE HEALTH PROBLEMS: ONE LEBANESE-GUINEAN (REF A) HAS
A VISIBLE GROWTH OR TUMOR ON HIS HEAD DATING FROM EARLY
1977. POST-INTERROGATION DIET WAS POORER THAN OUTSIDE
GUINEAN FARE (WHICH IS ITSELF SPARTAN) BUT SUFFICIENT FOR
MOST REASONABLY HEALTHY PRISONERS TO SURVIVE. HEALTH CARE
WAS MINIMAL OR ABSENT, ALTHOUGH AT LEAST A FEW SEVERE CASES
GOT MEDICAL TREATMENT OF USUAL GUINEAN QUALITY (MEDIocre TO
INCOMPETENT). OVERALL IMPRESSION IS THAT DURING THE SEVERAL
WAVES OF ARRESTS AND PUBLIC PURGES IN LAST EIGHT YEARS,
TORTURE, STARVATION, AND OTHER INHUMANE TREATMENT WERE USED
SELECTIVELY (AS NOTED IN ALATA BOOK) BUT IN SUBSEQUENT PERIOD,
AS FAR AS LIMITED SAMPLING INDICATES, THE CHIEF PROBLEMS OF
MOST PRISONERS BECAME BOREDOM AND HEALTH CARE.

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SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 AID-05 /092 W
-----016504 271534Z /43
R 271255Z DEC 77

FM AMEMBASSY CONAKRY
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3848
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 CONAKRY 2417

8. WHY IS SEKOU TOURE GRANTING THESE UNPRECEDENTED AMNESTIES?
(A) IMMEDIATE REASON WAS VICTORY OF GUINEA'S HAFIA FOOTBALL CLUB OVER GHANA ON DECEMBER 18, AFTER WHICH TOURE, CHEERED BY THrong, DECLARED NATIONAL HOLIDAY. EUPHORIA SET RIGHT MOOD FOR MAJOR RECONCILIATORY GESTURE. TWO OF THOSE AMNESTIED, MAMADI SYLLA AND ABDOULAYE TOURE, ARE FATHERS OF GUINEAN FOOTBALL PLAYERS AND WHO SCORED KEY GOALS IN FINALS AT ACCRA AND CONAKRY, BANGALI SYLLA AND AMARA TOURE. (B) TOURE ALSO SEEMS TO BE LISTENING AGAIN TO MODERATE ADVISORS WHO APPARENTLY HAVE URGED PRAGMATISM AND CONCILIATION INTERNALLY. ALTHOUGH TOURE'S RECOVERY FROM AUGUST MARKET RIOTS INCLUDED STIFF DOSES OF DOGMATIC "SOCIALIST" RHETORIC (TO REAFFIRM HIS "PRINCIPLES"), IN PRACTICE (AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED) GOG IS TOLERATING A BOOMING PRIVATE MARKET SUPPLIED WITH VARIETY OF SMUGGLES GOODS. THE SENEGAL BORDER HAS BEEN OPEN TO TRADERS FOR MONTHS; PRICES ON SOME OF THESE GOODS ARE REPORTED TO HAVE DROPPED AS MUCH AS 50 PCT; THE HATED ECONOMIC POLICE HAVE STILL NOT RPT NOT REAPPEARED IN MARKETPLACES SINCE THE RIOTS. TOURE HAS SUCCEEDED THEREBY IN EASING INTERNAL PRESSURES WHICH BUILT UP DANGEROUSLY LAST SUMMER. (C) EQUALLY IMPORTANT REASON IS PRESSURES FROM ABROAD ON HUMAN-RIGHTS
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FRONT. TOURE LASHED OUT FURIOUSLY AT CRITICISM FROM AMNESTY, ILHR, PSF, AND ALATA IN JUNE BUT FELT THE HEAT. LATER, QUIET DIPLOMACY BY FRANCE AND U.S. MAY HAVE HAD CONSIDERABLE WEIGHT. U.S. PROPOSED ICRC MISSION IN AUGUST AND BEGAN TO WARN GOG IN OCTOBER THAT HUMAN-RIGHTS WAS BECOMING SERIOUS IMPEDIMENT TO EXPANDED COOPERATION AND DIALOGUE; AMB STEPPED UP DIALOGUE ON ARRIVAL DECEMBER 6. HAVING AGREED TO RECEIVE RED CROSS MISSION, TOURE MAY HAVE CONCLUDED IT WAS TIME TO CLEAN UP CAMP BOIRO. MEANWHILE, FRENCH AMBASSADOR LEWIN HAS MADE SEVERAL APPROACHES TO TOURE ON HUMAN RIGHTS, FIRST ON BEHALF OF THREE LEBANESE (REF A), SUPPORTED BY A LETTER TO LEWIN FROM U.N. SECRETARY GENERAL WALDHEIM; THEN MORE BROADLY. LEWIN'S STRONGEST DEMARCHE WAS MADE ONLY ABOUT 10 DAYS BEFORE DECEMBER AMNESTY BEGAN. SEKOU TOURE PRESUMABLY WISHES TO SET STAGE FAVORABLY FOR VISIT OF FRENCH PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING IN 1978. LEBANESE CHARGE HAD ALSO

MADE RECENT DEMARCHE DIRECTLY TO TOURE ABOUT LEBANESE PRISONERS. CATHOLIC ORDER OF FATHERS OF HOLY SPIRIT HAVE LAUNCHED A NEW CAMPAIGN IN WESTERN EUROPE ON BEHALF OF ARCHBISHOP TCHIDIMBO. AMNESTIES MAY BE GENERALLY RELATED TO TREND TOWARD GUINEAN NATIONAL RECONCILIATION URGED ON TOURE BY PRAGMATISTS--AND HEEDED BY HIM SPORADICALLY--OF WHICH EXILE AMNESTY IS PART; LOGICALLY, MOST EXILES FEAR TO RETURN IN ALLEGEDLY AMNESTIED STATUS IF INTERNAL VICTIMS DO NOT ALSO BENEFIT FROM AMNESTIES. (D) LASTLY, ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS HAVE LIKELY PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN TOURE'S THINKING. IN VIRTUALLY EVERY CONVERSATION AMB HAS HAD WITH GOG OFFICIALS AND FOREIGN DIPLOMATS THERE HAS BEEN HEAVY EMPHASIS ON GOG INTEREST IN INCREASING FOREIGN ASSISTANCE IN AN

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EFFORT TO CORRECT INTERNAL ECONOMIC WEAKNESSES AND LACK OF DEVELOPMENT. GIVEN MULTIPLE INDICATIONS OF GROWING INTERNATIONAL CONCERN OVER HUMAN RIGHTS AND SPECIFIC STATEMENTS WE HAVE MADE THAT HUMAN-RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS REPRESENT IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN USG DECISION-MAKING ON FOREIGN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS, GOG IS LIKELY BEGINNING TO REALIZE THE SIGNIFICANCES PROGRESS IN HUMAN RIGHTS COULD HAVE FOR ITS OWN DEVELOPMENT NEEDS.

9. CONCLUSIONS: WE ARE GREATLY ENCOURAGED BY ABOVE DEVELOPMENTS AND HOPE ATMOSPHERE CAN BE MAINTAINED CONDUCIVE TO FURTHER PRISONER RELEASES AND IMPROVEMENT IN HUMAN RIGHTS PICTURE HERE. MOOD AND ATMOSPHERE ARE OF CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE IN THIS, AND WE BELIEVE IT ESSENTIAL THAT EMBASSY AND DEPT GIVE SPECIAL CONSIDERATION TO HOW EVERY ASPECT OF OUR RELATIONS WITH GOG IS HANDLED SO AS TO AVOID DISTURBING CURRENT POSITIVE TONE OF U.S.-GUINEAN RELATIONS. STRONGLY URGE THAT DEPT SPOKESMEN AVOID PUBLIC CRITICISM OR DENEGRATION OF SEKOU TOURE'S REGIME AS AN ANTAGONISTIC APPROACH COULD EASILY THREATEN PROSPECTS OF ADDITIONAL PRISONER RELEASES. SOURCES HERE EMPHATICALLY SOUND SAME NOTE, AS THEY DO NOT WANT TOURE TO BE DIVERTED FROM RECONCILIATION TRACK. WE WILL MEANWHILE CONTINUE OUR QUIET DIALOGUE WITH GOG ON HUMAN RIGHTS MATTERAS AS IT APPEARS TO BE PAYING OFF.

10. ACTION RECOMMENDED: BELIEVE DEPT SHOULD REVISE ESTIMATE OF GUINEAN POLITICAL PRISONERS DOWNWARD TO "SUBSTANTIALLY LESS THAN 1,000." RECOMMEND THAT DEPT COMPLETELY REVISE TEXT OF REPORT TO CONGRESS DUE JAN. 31 ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN GUINEA TO REFLECT PROMISING RECENT DEVELOPMENTS (THIS TEL AND REFS). REPORT SHOULD BE DISCREET REGARDING DETAILS LEST TOURE BE JOLTED OUT OF

HIS POSITIVE MOOD. EMBASSY WOULD LIKE TO HAVE CHANCE
TO SEE AND COMMENT ON REVISED REPORT BEFORE IT IS
SUBMITTED TO CONGRESS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
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